

INFO LOG-00 AID-00 AMAD-00 INL-00 DODE-00 DS-00 OIGO-00
UTED-00 VCI-00 H-00 TEDE-00 INR-00 LAB-01 L-00
MOFM-00 MOF-00 VCIE-00 NSAE-00 OIG-00 NIMA-00 EPAU-00
GIWI-00 SP-00 SSO-00 SS-00 FMP-00 EPAE-00 DSCC-00
PRM-00 DRL-00 SAS-00 FA-00 SWCI-00 /001W

R 161127Z NOV 09
FM AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1522
INFO AFRICAN UNION COLLECTIVE
DIA WASHINGTON DC
CIA WASHDC
NSC WASHINGTON DC
HQ USAFRICOM STUTTGART GE

UNCLAS LIBREVILLE 000499

DEPT FOR AF/C LISA KORTE; INR/B

E.O. 12958:N/A

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [GB](#)

SUBJECT: GABON: GOVERNMENT DEVELOPS ROADMAP FOR THE FUTURE

11. SUMMARY. Ali Bongo's new cabinet spent the weekend of November 7-9 at an off-site seminar in Lope National Park, located several hours by train from Libreville. The Prime Minister and members of government were tasked by President Bongo to develop a road map for "Emerging Gabon: Building a Shared Vision," the theme of his presidency. The seminar sessions covered three economic "pillars": "industrial Gabon," "green Gabon," and "Gabon for services." President Bongo attended the wrap up sessions on November 9. The ministers also discussed a code of ethics proposed by the President based on transparency, integrity, competence and declaration of personal wealth. This is the first policy retreat for the Gabonese Government and continues to signal President Bongo's interest in changing the expectations surrounding the government. END SUMMARY.

Ministerial Retreat at a National Park

12. President Ali Bongo initiated a governmental retreat and seminar at Lope National Park on November 7-9 to create a roadmap for governmental goals and policy. The Prime Minister, all other ministers, and their deputies attended the retreat.

13. The results of the seminar were discussed at the November 12 Council of Ministers meeting. The Council will establish task forces and ministerial focal points to carry out the seminar's recommendations. A code of ethics has been adopted and signed by members of government.

Three Pillars for Bongo's Government

14. On November 13, the President summarized his "Emerging Gabon" goals in a presentation to the diplomatic corps. He requested the support of Gabon's friends to achieve the goals, thereby ending poverty and increasing prosperity. Bongo intends to increase economic growth by reducing government spending on its bureaucracy, and increasing government investment in infrastructure and human resources. Bongo emphasized that he is responding to the demands of the Gabonese for change to improve their lives.

15. The details on the Three Pillars of Emerging Gabon from the Council meeting are as follows:

Industrial Gabon -- Develop Gabon's mineral wealth for clean energy, especially iron, manganese and gas; forestry wealth for value added production; electrical production to cover the country's needs and export; production of synthetic fertilizer.

Green Gabon -- Make Gabon a pioneer in green economic development based on durable management of forests; increase value added to forest products; develop "geotourism" based on Gabon's diverse flora and fauna; sustainable development of Gabon's 800 km maritime coastline and fresh water; take advantage of "carbon exchanges."

Gabon for Services -- Develop Gabon's human capital to achieve the other two Pillars by turning Gabon into a center of excellence for advanced training and research, tourism business, health and media; make Gabon a pioneer in Sub-Saharan Africa for value added services.

Strong Executive; Empower Ministers

[¶6](#). Despite the strong position he holds as Gabon's chief executive, Bongo's adoption of an American style off-site is one of several measures he has taken to empower the cabinet and energize his team. Bongo keeps tabs on his government through the close relationship he has with his ministers, many of whom were members of his "reformers" cohort during Omar Bongo's presidency, and the weekly Council of Ministers meeting.

[¶7](#). COMMENT. With the launching of the offsite, President Bongo appears to be shifting his focus from establishing his government to focusing on the economic future of Gabon and how the country is governed. It remains to be seen how much autonomy the Ministers will actually have to spend their budgets, hire and deploy staff, and carry out programs. END COMMENT.